

Socialist Worker

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For Workers Power and International Socialism

inside

**Formation of new
socialist organisation
in Aotearoa**

Double page spread on the policies, tactics and
structure of the Socialist Workers Organisation

\$1

Fiscal envelope thrown out

Maoridom slams the Nats

**Keep them on
the run!**

***Kia whawhai
tonu ake ake
ake!***



Smith's ministry investigates high school students

EDUCATION minister Lockwood Smith lost his perpetual smirk when a group of university and high school students bailed him up in his Wellsford office on February 17.

The students presented Smith with a petition opposing student fees signed by 2,000 high school students.

They arrived at Smith's office unannounced, since he has a track record of not

fronting up to students.

Caught unawares, Smith could only bleat about his visitors not knocking on the door of his publicly-funded office - to which they replied that if they'd telegraphed their arrival he might have leapt out the window.

Smith demanded that everyone identify themselves (and their schools) before discussing the petition.

Afterwards, the education minister

got the Education Ministry to contact two high schools to inquire about the absence of students who'd called on him.

Smith's office denied this action amounted to intimidation or was politically motivated when rung by Barry Lee, the father of two students involved.

"But Smith's press secretary Mathew Hooton admitted that there haven't been any other cases where the

minister's office has made this kind of inquiry," noted Lee.

He has sent the ministry a "please explain" letter.

"I'm very angry because such heavy-handed action from the ministry could intimidate schools or students from protesting against government policies," Lee added.

"In this case the schools acted in a very principled way, but if Smith is using his department to try to muzzle protest that is a very serious issue."

Bolger's Decent Society



In the 1990 election campaign, Jim Bolger pledged to create a "decent society". Let's see how his promise has translated into reality.

National MP Christine Fletcher once refused an office on the 12th floor of parliament because it was, she said, inhabited by beer-swilling males.

Now she and her husband have bought a hotel in Coromandel - which, naturally, sells beer most profitably.

To date, there has been no sign that Fletcher will be putting her abhorrence of "beer-swilling males" ahead of her desire to make money.

Despite all the government propaganda about how much funding is being ploughed into health, the statistics tell a very different story.

The amount being spent by the government on health per person has dropped between 1.5 and 2.5 per cent each year since 1990.

Meanwhile, National is pushing health bodies to implement stricter rationing controls. The inevitable result - longer waiting lists and people dying before getting treated.

National MP David Carter has just sold 107 hectares of Canterbury farmland to a Japanese investor.

The same David Carter is sitting on a parliamentary select committee considering legislation which would ease restrictions on the ability of foreign capital to purchase New Zealand farmland.

True to form, his National colleagues don't see any conflict of interests here.

An onion picker at Te Teko has just toiled 60 back-breaking hours and got paid \$90. That works out at a mere \$1.50 per hour.

Yet when National's hatchet man Bill Birch unveiled the Employment Contracts legislation he promised (in a pamphlet delivered to every letterbox) that wages wouldn't be affected.



Can't afford state rents

THE NUMBER of vacant state houses in Porirua has more than doubled in the past year. The reason? People can't afford the rent.

Housing NZ has a monopoly on rental accommodation in Porirua. On government orders, this state-owned corporation has taken a heartless "market rents" approach to tenants.

Many are paying 70 per cent of their low incomes on rent. Obviously this is at the expense of other necessities like food, power, health care, clothes and transport.

Dinner plates & toilet brushes

IN A WEEK when Telecom and Air NZ disclosed record profits and MPs were told that \$97 million would be spent on upgrading their offices, half the service staff at two Auckland hospitals were given redundancy notice.

The rest were taken on by the new outside contractor, but face pay cuts and increased workloads.

A crown health manager, giving an example of their new duties, said cleaners would in future also have to serve meals. How long before we see hospital staff running around with a dinner plate in one hand and a toilet brush in the other?

This is the brave new world of contracted out, speeded up, lower paid, free market labour.

No food

A REPORT from Social Welfare has found an "explosion" in demand for foodbanks took place in 1991/92.

This is when National's benefit cuts began to bite.

There are 365 foodbanks in NZ, giving out about 40,000 parcels a month.

Their use is "entrenched", says the report.

Workers get no gain for the years of pain



Buller millworkers blockade road to save their jobs (see report on page 14). Struggles like this are breaking out all round the country as angry workers demand a better deal after all the years of suffering. There is a spirit of fighting back in the air.

More combative mood inside working class

By GRANT MORGAN

There are clear signs of a more combative mood taking hold inside the working class.

Union membership is on the rise again after a huge decline in the wake of the 1991 Employment Contracts Act.

There has been a marked rise in the number of strikes over the last couple of years, in contrast to the gloomy days of 1991-2.

More employers are settling quickly to avoid a strike.

A stronger role is being played by "white collar" unionists like teachers, nurses and civil servants who hardly figured in strike statistics a decade ago.

There have been lots of protests over cuts in social services, all of which have enjoyed overwhelming sympathy from working class people.

Early stages

However, this upturn in worker activism is only in its early stages.

The fightback is undermined by union officials who aren't putting themselves at the head of struggle. Some examples are the Engineers officials who diverted the jobs fightback at BHP steel mill and the Tramways officials who destroyed the Yellow Bus contract struggle.

The fightback is

mostly confined to disconnected sections of workers. Consequently they find it hard to link their sectional demands with openly class demands, such as killing the Employment Contracts Act on the ground.

There is still considerable lack of confidence among even the best organised unionists. This is illustrated by the retreat of the Kinleith strikers in 1993 and the compromise of the seafarers last year.

So the upturn in worker activism is patchy, hesitant and fragile – but it is there.

And that's a great thing after the downturn of the 1980s.

"POSITIVE MOOD as profits come in" trumpeted one newspaper headline.

The New Zealand economy is in the middle of a strong surge.

A couple of years ago working folk were told we must tighten our belts in the interests of the country, that there was a recovery around the corner and we'd all benefit from it.

To many people, this sounded like common sense.

And since unions were reeling from the Employment Contracts Act, employers were able to slash wages, jobs and conditions.

Now, however, company order books are full. Flush with profits, employers are making massive investments and paying out record dividends.

Wage restraint no longer makes sense to workers suffering while the rich get richer.

That's why the number of strikes is on the rise.

And when workers win, even if the victories are small, they gain the confidence to aim for bigger things.

Spirit of Waitangi

Right now, Maori confidence is on the rise after strong protests at Waitangi and elsewhere forced the government onto the back foot over the fiscal envelope.

The media worked itself up into a frenzy of outrage after the Waitangi Day demonstration. "Day of disgrace" screamed a very typical editorial in the *Christchurch Press*.

Led by Bolger, the Nats charged headlong into the fray against "spitting, insulting, idiotic" Maori radicals.

Together, the politicians and the media tried to

whip up a redneck, white backlash – but they failed.

Traditionally, Maori rights haven't been a cause dear to the heart of mainstream Pakeha workers.

But now most are so brassed off with the government that they're loving the spectacle of Bolger's gang getting their butts kicked by opponents of the fiscal envelope.

Consequently, there is growing sympathy for the Maori cause.

The bosses know how dangerous it is for their system when working folk make the link between poor wages, the creeping privatisation of health care, the destruction of the natural environment and Maori claims for justice.

Divide and rule is a fundamental pillar of capitalism.

Fighting unity

One of the main jobs of the newly formed Socialist Workers Organisation is to bring militants from different struggles together in one party – Maori and Pakeha, white and blue collar, male and female, employed and unemployed workers.

We want a fighting unity – not the passive unity of all voting the same way once in three years and then entrusting our fate to the politicians.

A fighting unity needs a fighting party – a socialist party that won't sell out in today's struggles because we're committed to dumping the whole system that keeps workers poor in a period of economic recovery.

The growing anger means the prospects of building a real socialist alternative are improving.

So how about joining us right now?

Quake uncovers class

THE RECENT Kobe earthquake in Japan was shown by the media as an "act of God" that wreaked terrible devastation on the whole city. While the damage done was horrific, with over 5,000 killed and 310,000 left homeless, it wasn't the "whole city" that suffered. Journalists visiting the city reported driving through the central business district and middle class suburbs that remained almost

untouched out into the outskirts where the devastation was almost complete.

These areas are inhabited by the working class of Kobe, forced out by the high cost of housing in Japan.

Affordable housing is of flimsy construction, and the earthquake flattened entire areas such as the densely populated, working class suburb of Nagata.

Reports show that 90 per cent of those killed were crushed to death under the rubble of collapsed buildings.

In the aftermath the Japanese government has been quick to promise billions of yen to help rebuild the damaged roading and electricity system.

But there has been little relief for those ordinary people who have to rebuild their lives from scratch.

THINGS THEY SAY

"We spent most of our time on trade."

■ Jim Bolger on his talks with United States deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott.

"Their constant bleating about poverty is one of the reasons why a number of New Zealanders believe that poverty is a problem."

■ National MP John Carter on church leaders.

"If the minister of finance can afford a taxation cut, I believe most New Zealanders would prefer that money going to health for a decent health service."

■ Oamaru resident Murray Jones.

"I doubt 5 per cent of New Zealanders, even 5 per cent of Maori, support them."

■ Jim Bolger on protesters at Waitangi.

"I'd be interested to know how he decided that figure."

■ Derek Fox, editor of *Mana* magazine.

"They visited me and told me they were happy that I could supply Iraq because they couldn't."

■ Arms dealer Carlos Cardoen, who sold cluster bombs to Iraq in the mid-1980s, on US embassy staff in Chile.

"I don't think that's appropriate behaviour for queer... I mean Queen Street."

■ Auckland deputy mayor David Hay on the Hero procession.



Tell 'em, Phil

PHILIP BURDON, National's trade negotiations minister, angrily decried the actions of Auckland primary school principals who resolved not to enrol non-English speaking students until adequate funding is made available for their teaching.

"It's made all the more offensive," he thundered, "because of the implied endorsement it gives to the insipient racism that is all too prevalent in our society."

While he's right about this, maybe he should be telling it to his own cabinet colleagues.

Only the week before, tourism minister John Banks stated that he was "disinterested" in a report by the race relations conciliator that he had breached the Human Rights Act by his use of the term "Maori PT".

what socialists

say about...

Being in the minority

RIGHT NOW most workers accept capitalism and see socialists as idealists or troublemakers.

Why do workers accept reactionary ideas, and how can this change?

A basic proposition of marxism is that it is not ideas that shape society, but the state of society that shapes ideas.

Today's ruling class controls education, newspapers and television and its ideas dominate them.

But the power of ruling class ideas doesn't arise simply from a "conspiracy" of rich newspaper owners, professors, bureaucrats and ministers.

Capitalist ideas seem to make sense because they reflect the world we experience. Businesses are run for profit. Society is divided into classes. It would appear to be common sense to believe these things are "natural".

Marxists aren't surprised to find the working class Tory or the sexist trade unionist. If the thinking of workers wasn't dominated by capitalist ideology, the system couldn't survive.

If socialism can't be created on behalf of workers, but must be the act of the working class itself, how can this happen when capitalist ideas dominate the working class?

Clearly, the ideas of workers can't be changed on a mass scale simply by socialist propaganda. *Socialist Worker* can't match the operations of the millionaire press.

■ Material base

For socialist ideas to spread on a mass scale they must have a material base. Just as capitalist ideas dominate the thinking of workers because they reflect daily experience, so the spread of socialist ideas will reflect

changes in that daily experience.

There is a widespread confusion that needs to be cleared up. It is supposed that the more people suffer, the more revolutionary they become.

In fact it's not suffering, but the experience of *fighting against* suffering, that is the material basis for the growth of socialist ideas.

If there is little workers struggle, with many defeats, then workers feel society can't be changed.

■ Confidence

But when the level of struggle is high, victory following victory, the confidence of workers in their ability to change their own lives rises.

They become more able to see that alternatives to capitalism are possible.

If the level of class struggle is so high that it threatens the existence of the capitalist state, socialist ideas can spread like wildfire.

But attempts by socialists to spread ideas using papers, pamphlets and books are necessary.

Workers don't have to be socialists before they get involved in battles that challenge the ruling class, but their ability to win those battles is closely linked to their level of political consciousness.

Mass strikes, workplace occupations and demonstrations create conditions for socialist ideas to spread, but it's impossible for workers to improvise, suddenly and in the heat of battle, a fully worked-out socialist understanding of the world.

The socialist ideas have to be there, ready to inform those struggles, to generalise from these new experiences, and to prove their practical relevance by pointing the way forward.

■ JOHN MOLYNEUX

Fiscal envelope: return to sender!

by EVAN POATA-SMITH and GRANT MORGAN

MAORI ANGER over the government's approach to treaty claims has reached breaking point.

Maori have reacted strongly against National's fiscal envelope which puts a \$1 billion cap on settlements.

There is a real fear that a Maori elite may cut a sweet deal with the crown along the lines of Sealord. This would serve up gourmet fish dishes to the Maori elite while Maori workers and beneficiaries are left to fight for a few rotten fishheads.

Maori anger spilled over into protest at Waitangi on February 6, forcing the cancellation of the main ceremony.

Despite media condemnation of Maori protesters as extremist thugs, in reality they expressed the mainstream mood of flaxroots Maori.

Miserly

The fiscal envelope has nothing to do with the Maori right to tino rangatiratanga (self-determination). This is shown by the miserly amount of money the government is putting up as "compensation" for the terrible injustices done to Maori.

The claims now before the Waitangi Tribunal are estimated to be worth \$50 billion. More are in the pipeline. Clearly, the government's \$1 billion offer is a rip-off worthy of last century's blanket-for-land deals.

If the government was serious about settling Maori claims, why weren't Maori consulted in the development of the fiscal envelope policy?

The minister in charge of treaty negotiations, Doug Graham, claims that Maori opinion is cur-

rently being canvassed in a round of nationwide hui. But this is bullshit.

Right from the start, the government clearly stated that key areas were not for negotiation, such as the amount of the fiscal cap and the ownership of the conservation estate and natural resources.

Only after a series of angry Maori demonstrations and hui condemned the fiscal envelope did Graham shift slightly from his previous stance that the \$1 billion cap was "non-negotiable". He is

now hinting that the government might talk about more money to those Maori who would "negotiate sensibly".

This indicates the cabinet realises its policy lies in tatters and so it may offer a little more to the Maori elite in a bid to bankroll a split in Maori opposition to the fiscal envelope.

So flaxroots Maori need to keep a close eye on the Maori elite to make sure the successful campaign against the fiscal envelope is not sold out from within.

What's wrong with the fiscal envelope?

By EVAN POATA-SMITH

THE PRINCIPLES of te Tiriti o Waitangi haven't been included among the government's fiscal envelope principles.

The Nats are trying to evade the essence of the treaty - tino rangatiratanga, the right of Maori to determine their own affairs.

Indeed, the government has focused solely on the issue of settling land assets. This avoids the issue of Maori self-determination altogether.

The \$1 billion cap attaches a purely capitalist value to the land, which ignores its spiritual and historical significance to iwi and hapu. In reply, they are saying that the land and treaty rights are not for sale.

Reassuring investors

Out of the seven settlement principles put forward by the government, only one gives any indication of fairness and justice for Maori claimants. The rest are all concerned with reassuring investors and businesses that the claims won't prevent them from continuing to make money by exploiting the environment and workers.

The government refuses to recognise Maori ownership of natural resources - unless they were being used in 1840! This contravenes article II of the treaty, which was

signed with an eye to the future and all the technological developments that go with it. No-one signs a treaty with a view to the past.

The government lies when it says Maori could only claim crown-owned land. 99 per cent of all conservation lands have been put outside the claims process.

But iwi haven't been fooled by the government's propaganda. A national hui in Turangi on January 29, attended by more than 1,000 representatives of tribes in both islands as well as pan-Maori organisations, unanimously slammed the fiscal envelope.

It called on the government to allow Maori to determine their own land settlement policies.

"The old people were for us"

Tihema Galvin is a 72 year old Maori kaumatua and working class activist who lives in Rotorua. He has supported many demonstrations at Waitangi over the decades. But this year's Waitangi Day protest was different, said Tihema, because "for the first time the old people up there were for us".



Rotorua march against the fiscal envelope

This has been followed by tribal hui in Rotorua, Otago, Tauranga and Gisborne which likewise rejected the government's policy.

These actions have put the government on the back foot. It is now under pressure to come up with a serious option for Maori.

Most decisions about the ownership and allocation of resources in capitalist society are made behind the closed doors of business boardrooms, not in parliament.

A real settlement of Maori claims can only occur when Maori workers, along with workers of all races, can democratically control these resources to meet human need, not profit.

National hui resolution, Turangi

1,000 PEOPLE attended the national Maori hui at Hirangi marae, Turangi, on January 29. They represented major tribes in both islands as well as pan-Maori organisations. The following resolution was passed unanimously:

"Because the government's proposal for the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims represents another fundamental breach of tino rangatiratanga, this hui rejects the government's proposal for the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims including the fiscal envelope in its entirety."

"E whakahe ana te hui i tu ki Hirangi marae, i te kaupapa a te kawanatanga mo nga whakatutuki, me nga whakatau i whakaritea e ratau mo nga take raupatu whenua, a taonga hoki, tae atu ki te putea moni i whakaritea e te kawanatanga mo enei take."



Mass action beats French government

MASS PROTESTS and strikes in France have forced another humiliating defeat on the French government. This is the fourth major defeat for the right wing government in a year.

Teachers, nursery workers and lecturers struck for a day on February 7 to demand more money for education and to support a student revolt in the technical colleges.

Around 100,000 people took to the streets across France, with 20,000 on a demonstration in Paris alone.

The students were up in arms over a government plan to limit the chance of those at a technical college to go onto university. They declared strikes and boycotts of lectures and joined the February 7 day of action to defend



French students took to the streets and, joined by striking teachers, forced the conservative government into a humiliating backdown

education.

The students followed up with more protests on February 10.

5,000 demonstrated against prime minister Edouard Balladur when he visited Nantes in the west of the country. 2,000 marched in Clermont Ferrand, 4,000

in Grenoble and thousands more in towns from Aix-en-Provence to Toulouse.

A shaken Balladur announced that he was dropping the plan for the technical colleges and would negotiate with student leaders.

In the same week

there was industrial action by airline workers, airport fire crews, Paris postal workers and some rail workers.

Some press and TV commentators are now worrying about the possibility of "hot summer" of protest in France.

500,000 German workers strike

500,000 GERMAN engineering workers have staged walk-outs over pay in the last month, and hundreds of thousands more are to join "warning strikes" in coming weeks.

The giant IG Metall Union has threatened all-out strikes if employers don't make a pay offer.

Fear of job losses has seen German metal workers accept wage settlements below the inflation rate over the past few years.

No benefit

But now the government is talking about an economic upturn, company order books are full and the employers are making big profits - yet they don't want any benefits from this recovery going to workers.

IG Metall Union leaders are claiming a 6 per cent wage rise. But the German government has imposed costly new taxes and metal employers are demanding clawbacks to fund any pay increase.

The employers are threatening lock-outs if the warning strikes continue.

Lockouts would be backed up by a law which denies social security benefits to workers laid off during a dispute.

End military links with butchers of East Timor

by **BARRY LEE**

AS REPORTS of murder, abduction, torture and rape flow daily from East Timor, the Bolger government is stepping up military links with the Indonesian regime.

The air forces of New Zealand and Indonesia are due to begin joint exercises in August. The head of Indonesia's air force, air chief marshal Rilo Pambudi, visited Aotearoa a few weeks ago as guest of the Defence Force.

The Indonesian military are organising the black shirt "ninja" gangs that roam the streets of Dili, capital of East Timor, terrorising pro-independence and pro-democracy activists.

There was a global outcry against

the murder of six Timorese by Indonesian troops last month. After first claiming they were guerrillas, the army was finally forced to admit they were civilians.

The Indonesian navy has been boosted to 93 warships with the purchase of 39 vessels that used to belong to the former East Germany. Indonesian rear admiral Gofar Suwarno says his country needs 400 to 500 warships.

The huge undersea oil reserves

discovered in the Timor Gap are at the heart of Indonesia's rapid expansion of naval firepower.

Australia has signed a treaty with Indonesia for the joint exploitation of the Timor Gap oil. New Zealand is an interested party in this treaty because of our country's close relationship with Australia.

Pressure must be put on the National government to end military links with the butchers of East Timor.

BANGLADESH GENERAL STRIKE

JUTE WORKERS in Bangladesh began a strike on February 18 to save the industry from IMF-decreed privatisation.

They were attacked

by the state forces, who killed four.

This sparked a one-day general strike which shut down the whole country.

Again, the state

forces attacked, killing eight strikers and jailing scores.

Workers Federation president Tafazzul Hussain is calling for messages of support.

Avoid "Asian tiger"

NEW ZEALANDERS are told by prime minister Jim Bolger to take a look at the "Asian tiger" economies and see how they're booming.

I recently worked for one month in Singapore, a country where the rich are really rich and the poor are extremely poor.

Singaporean workers are competing against cheap imported labour. With Malaysia being so close, workers cross the causeway to find jobs. They are subjected to low rates of pay and face a very dangerous working environment.

Imported housemaids get paid two hundred Singapore dollars a month, work long hours and are placed on curfews by their wealthy employers. These are often American, Australian, British and NZ executives who receive enormous salaries from the multinationals they work for.

The rich Chinese families have a family day on Sundays. The housemaids prepare the food, clean the house and make sure the children are well presented for the family day. Then the housemaids

are told to leave the house. They are seen roaming the streets of Singapore until they are allowed to return.

The "Asian tiger" might be alive and well, but it's only serving one class - the capitalist class. Avoid the "Asian tiger".

□ UNIONIST
Auckland

letters to the editor

Agree? Disagree? Send a letter to: *Socialist Worker*, PO Box 8851, Auckland. Keep them brief, please.



Rising of the young generation



THE FISCAL envelope has opened the door to all the other concerns of ordinary Maori - education, jails, health and so on.

We're seeing the rising of the young generation.

Our people are saying: No more!

No more! We've had enough of our land being ripped off. Fight! Fight! Stand up and fight.

It's kia kaha to all our people. We're not selling our mokopuna and whakapapa.

□ MARTIAL NEWTON
Rotorua

Hierarchical

I RECENTLY visited Toyota, a plant whose Japanese team system is touted as lending itself to a more satisfied, motivated workforce.

I found the names of managers and leading hands had been changed to group leaders and team leaders, but the system was as hierarchical as anywhere.

The management insists on the right to manage, and maintains that responsibility for discipline must lie with them.

Workers are being conned into accepting the Japanese team system which most would reject were unions not being used to sell them the idea.

□ TONY HAINES
Auckland

Undemocratic sacking of board

TOMORROW'S Schools was accompanied by the ideology of small government, fiscal control and entry of private enterprise into public education.

This led to the abolition of local Education Boards and the downsizing of the Education Department, which then became the Ministry of Education.

National continued Labour's agenda with de-zoning and "enterprise education" - that is, allowing industry to directly enter, and control, educational processes within schools.

Redistribution of educational decision making power to schools is a joke. The capitalist state perceives itself as "manager" of an education "corporation".

Thus the capitalist state, in the form of the minister of education, intervened in Nga Tapuwae College to protect "mainstream" (read: Pakeha) education from a Maori Board of Trustees (read: pesky Maori radicals).

Clearly, things at Nga Tapuwae were not great. However, the undemocratic sacking of a democratically elected

board should not be lost in the debate over possible solutions to the college's problems.

Do not be fooled by simple notions of the "rolling back of the state" and "decentralisation".

The capitalist state exercises as much - if not more - control over education than ever before.

The state, however, has been able to relieve itself of responsibility over educational outcomes by blaming the schools for poor results.

□ B., Wellington

postmarks

■ AT WAITANGI I witnessed a protest of considerable anger and frustration.

As a young Maori worker, what worried me were elements of racism directed against Pakehas. This division by race can only hurt the movement.

Any social movement that wants radical change must fight the ruling class.

□ ANDREW WALTON
Hamilton

■ DURING OUR smoko breaks my workmates and I had to endure the prattlings of our boss.

He wants only his ideas in our minds.

This led to us going into a corner of the factory for our smoko to talk without him on our backs.

Of course the boss doesn't like this. I've been questioned why I caused "disharmony" among his workers.

My reply was that workers need unity as a class.

□ GARRY
Hamilton

■ THANK YOU for your support of Gay Oakes.

Gay's campaign is progressing well.

We are organising public meetings here in Christchurch.

We are also compiling a submission to the Parole Board seeking Gay's release on compassion grounds.

□ KATHLEEN MILLS
Christchurch

New socialist organisation formed in Aotearoa

National structure, planned campaigns, regular meetings

by GRANT MORGAN

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS ORGANISATION (SWO) is a new party formed from the recent merger of the Socialist Workers Party and the International Socialist Organisation.

The SWO has a national structure with branches in Auckland, Waikato, Tairāhema, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, plus members in several other places.

The membership of the SWO is 86, having gone up by 17 in the three weeks since the merger conference. Every branch has experienced a rise in numbers.

Small though we are, the SWO is six times larger than any other NZ group calling itself revolutionary. And our non-sectarian socialist politics coupled with the growing anger among workers, students and Maori means there are excellent prospects for a continuing rise in membership.

Socialist Worker, the SWO's fortnightly paper, will start off as easily the biggest selling paper on the Left in this country. All the signs are that sales will grow rapidly. Circulation figures will be published in the near future.

The SWO is aligned with the International Socialist tendency which has organisations in Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, South Africa,

United States, Zimbabwe and other countries.

The International Socialist tendency is growing fast. Its biggest section is the Socialist Workers Party in Britain, with a membership of 10,000 and expanding influence amongst worker militants.

The SWO will be campaigning against the Employment Contracts Act, rising student fees, state house market rents, the National government, Roger Douglas's ACT and attacks on the dole.

We will be establishing campus clubs at Auckland and Canterbury universities this year in addition to our existing club at Dunedin. They will be called Socialist Worker Student Clubs. We invite all students to participate.

Each SWO branch will be holding regular (weekly or fortnightly) meetings. You don't have to be a party member to come along. All friends of the SWO are warmly invited to branch meetings.

Working class people are getting kicked in the guts by the capitalist employers and politicians who are running the country. The best way you can take the fight to these bastards is by joining the SWO.

Your local SWO branch will have a membership card you can sign, or you can post the coupon on page 10. The only qualifications you need are a healthy hatred of the present system and a desire to fight for a democratic and socialist world.

Why you should join the socialists

by ANDREW GEDDIS

WE LIVE in a world in crisis. Hunger, environmental devastation and war ruin the lives of millions.

Here in New Zealand business and the rich make huge profits while ordinary workers, beneficiaries and students grow poorer.

Maori continue to be refused their rights under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Women remain oppressed in both the home and the workplace.

All these horrors have their roots in the greedy capitalist system that controls how things we need are made and distributed.

crisis gripping the world is to overthrow the system of private profit we now live under.

It must be replaced with a system of collective, democratic control.

A system of planned production, in which human needs are met rather than individual greed.

A system in which those who work in factories, offices, universities, hospitals and other places control what is done there.

A system in which all will have the chance for meaningful work.

But such a change will not come by itself. Crucial to building a new socialist society is a revolutionary party which organises all those who hate the system and want it gone.

This party must educate workers and support their struggles.

It must collectively make decisions and then carry them out.

It must be the leading voice in the call for change.

Without such an organisation the world is condemned to ongoing crisis, with millions of lives wasted by the inability of capitalists to meet humanity's basic needs.

If you hate the system we live under, if you want a better world, then join us.



Delegates to the founding conference of the Socialist Workers Organisation

by BRIAN ROPER

SANDRA LEE and Helen Clark often attack the National government for ignoring the plight of workers and the poor. We applaud them when they do so.

But we challenge them to match their words with deeds. It's not enough to loudly talk about what the Nats are doing to us. We need a fightback now.

We share with supporters of Labour and the Alliance a hatred of the Nats and a desire to get Boger's government out - and the sooner the better.

We work constructively with supporters of the Alliance and Labour in day-to-day struggles around things like health cuts, pay and conditions, user pays education and state house market rents.

We recognise that there are important differences between a party like National, which openly supports big business, and reformist parties like the Alliance and Labour which have ties to organised workers and voters likely to represent ordinary life.

We offer parties which promise to take from the rich and give to the poor, rather than the Nats who

promise to take even more from the poor in order to fund further tax cuts for the rich.

Before the formation of NewLabour in 1989 there was no viable alternative to the probusiness, free market policies of Labour and National.

Rise of NewLabour

The rise of NewLabour, followed eighteen months later by the Alliance, thus represented a step forward for the working class in this country. Now even Labour is forced to pay lip-service to the concerns of its working class supporters.

We urge a vote for the Alliance because we know that an election victory for a Labour-Alliance coalition will undermine the confidence of bosses and lift the confidence of workers.

So why are we critical of the Alliance? Leaders of the Alliance (like their counterparts in Labour) repeatedly tell us that the best thing we can do to get rid of the Nats is wait for the next election and vote them into power.

But the reality is that workers need better wages and conditions now. Bureaucrats are struggling to survive in an envi-

ronment of appalling poverty. Students can't afford to keep paying fees that go up year after year.

We need action on issues like these now.

That's why revolutionary socialists are always trying to push forward the mass struggles for reforms.

Electoreering distracts attention from building the struggles that really count - the strikes and protests that can defeat the attacks of bosses and the anti-worker policies of the Nats.

Many Alliance supporters claim that revolution will never happen and so the best that we can do is fight for reforms.

Here and now it's true that we must fight for reforms, such as better health and education, abolition of the Employment Contracts Act and higher incomes for working folk.

Not the best place

The problem is that being in the Alliance or Labour isn't the best place to fight for reforms, because when the leaders of these parties say "fight" they usually mean stay at home, do nothing, just give us money and vote for us.

If we look at all of the major

problems we face - the rich getting richer and the poor poorer, unemployment and poverty, racism and women's oppression - none of these can be solved without fundamental social change. And that means getting rid of the ultimate cause of these problems - capitalism.

The Alliance and Labour are both committed to managing capitalism, not getting rid of it. Therefore they can never do more than make minor changes.

System needs changing

But it's not enough to try and patch the system up - it needs to be changed from the ground up. And change on that scale can only happen when workers overthrow capitalism and replace it with a democratic, socialist society.

For this reason, we don't just say "vote Alliance" - we say "vote Alliance without illusions".

A Labour-Alliance coalition won't change the fundamentals, only a socialist revolution can do that. And that's why we in the Socialist Workers Organisation are fighting for reforms and arguing for revolution.

by ANDREW COOPER and GRANT MORGAN

KARL MARX once wrote: "The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves".

What this means is that no party, not even a mass socialist party supported by the majority of workers, can simply take power and decree socialism.

We put our faith in socialism from below - a socialism that comes from the

mass actions of workers and the oppressed, not something imposed from above.

The SWO wants to grow large enough to exercise real influence in the class struggle. This isn't for our own benefit, but so we are able to promote the self-emancipation of the working class.

We never want to rule over the working class.

Many people who hate the present system are put off joining us because they mistakenly identify socialism with Stalinism.

But the 20 parties in the

International Socialist tendency - with whom the SWO identifies - are not only implacable opponents of Stalinism, but can sensibly explain how and why it arose in Russia.

The 1917 Bolshevik revolution gave power to the soviets - democratically elected multi-party workers' councils. For the first time in history workers were free to run the affairs of state.

Within 18 months, however, the armies of fourteen capitalist states had invaded Russia. This sparked off three years of warfare which decimated the tiny Russian working class. The social base for workers' power was physically destroyed.

The political vacuum was filled by the Stalinist bureaucracy. To protect itself from (particularly military) competition with the West, the bureaucracy subjected Russian working people to horrific forms of exploitation and oppression.

This gave rise to a system of state capitalism where the economy was owned by the state and the state was "owned" by the all-powerful bureaucracy. The bureaucracy acted as a "collective capitalist".

What happened in Stalinist Russia was a tragedy - but it doesn't prove the "failure of socialism". It was the opposite, it shows that the way forward for the working class is to overthrow every ruling elite and build socialism from below.

The success of the Alliance is a sign that there is a socialist consciousness among workers who are tired of the way the system works and want to overthrow it.

This socialist perspective is the best antidote to all the other ideas that weaken workers, such as employer pressure, anti-worker laws and bureaucratic union hierarchies.

When workers go on strike against employers or the government, they begin to see their collective power and learn that they can take on the bosses and win.

Then unions become the training schools for confident, militant, experienced workers who naturally gravitate towards socialist ideas.

That's why the bosses have such a hatred of socialists.

Strikes and socialists

by GRANT MORGAN and BARRY LEE

UNIONS ARE the basic organisations of workers. They are our first line of defence against capitalist bosses' ceaseless attacks on our wages, conditions and rights.

So it's vital for socialism to be active inside the unions.

The Employment Contracts Act is a dagger pointed at the heart of socialism. Socialists must show how this law can be beaten by workers taking determined strike action and going out to other sections of the union movement for support.

Fair union officials tread a fine line between strikes which threaten their privileged position as negotiators between capital and labour.

The socialist union official will usually argue the focus of social debate down to negotiations, compromise, the agency of de-democratisation infecting some workers, legal options, voting Labour or Alliance.

But the socialist, while giving due attention to these things, will expand the focus of debate to include strikes, pickets, lockouts and the use of workers' rank-and-file control of the union, the conflict between capital and labour.

Socialists can raise issues because we aren't tied to a perpetual round of negotiations with employers, but issues are fought for as socialist consciousness where employers would be reluctant to have the workers' consciousness so radicalised.

This socialist perspective is the best antidote to all the other ideas that weaken workers, such as employer pressure, anti-worker laws and bureaucratic union hierarchies.

When workers go on strike against employers or the government, they begin to see their collective power and learn that they can take on the bosses and win.

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Socialism

Capitalism is a system of exploitation which generates inequality, crisis and war.

Although workers create society's wealth it is controlled by the ruling class for its own selfish ends.

Socialism can only be built when the working class takes control of social wealth and democratically plans its production and distribution to meet human needs, not private profits. This will eliminate all class divisions in society.

Stalinist countries such as China and Cuba, just like the former Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, have nothing to do with socialism. They are state capitalist. We support the struggles of workers against every dictatorial stalinist ruling class.

Revolution not reformism

The present system cannot be reformed to end exploitation and oppression, contrary to what Alliance, Labour and union leaders claim. It must be overthrown by the working class.

Capitalism's parliament, army, police and judiciary protect the ruling class. These institutions cannot be taken over and used by the working class.

**where
we
stand**



To pave the way to socialism the working class needs a new kind of state - a democratic workers state based on workers councils and workers militia.

Internationalism

Workers in every country are exploited by capitalism, so the struggle for socialism is global.

We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries. We fight racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls. We support all genuine national liberation struggles.

We are internationalists because socialism depends on spreading working class revolutions around the world.

Liberation from oppression

We fight for democratic rights. We oppose the oppression of women, Maori, Pacific Islanders, lesbians and gays.

All forms of oppression are used to divide the working class.

We support the right

of all oppressed groups to organise for their own defence. Their liberation is essential to socialist revolution and impossible without it.

Tino rangatiratanga

We support the struggle for Maori self determination.

The government's approach to Treaty claims has benefited a Maori elite while doing little for working class Maori.

Tino rangatiratanga cannot be achieved within capitalism. It will only become a reality with the establishment of a workers state.

Revolutionary party

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a mass revolutionary socialist party.

We are in the early stages of building such a party through involvement in the day-to-day struggles of workers and the oppressed.

The Socialist Workers Organisation must grow in size and influence to provide leadership in the struggle for working class self-emancipation.

We need to revitalise the unions with a rank-and-file movement.

If you like our ideas and want to fight for socialism, then join us.

socialist activity

20% membership rise in first 3 weeks

BEFORE THE first issue of *Socialist Worker* has hit the streets, the Socialist Workers Organisation has already experienced a 20 per cent increase in membership since the founding conference on February 4 and 5.

In the Timberlands area eight have joined, whilst Dunedin has gained three, Auckland and Wellington two each, and Waikato and Christchurch have one new member each.

Six joined the Timberlands branch at a recent meeting, and the branch's involvement in the Rotorua march against the fiscal envelope led to several new people coming to their next meeting, where two joined.

In Dunedin, ten joined the Socialist Worker Student Club at the university - more than last year when Clubs Day followed big student protests against tertiary fees.

Socialist students at Christchurch and Auckland have signed up new members for their campus clubs before the Clubs Day launches.

SWO branch meetings - all welcome

AUCKLAND 7pm every Tuesday at the Socialist Centre, 86 Princes St, Onehunga. Phone 6343 984.

- ☐ Feb 28 Will the fiscal envelope deliver justice?
- ☐ Mar 7 Is there a future barrier to socialism?
- ☐ Mar 14 How can we beat the Right?

WAIKATO 7pm every second Tuesday. Phone Ross in Hamilton 8476 302 or Michele in Huntly 8289 019.

- ☐ Mar 11 The new socialist organisation: what we're doing in 1995.
- ☐ Mar 25 The relationship between the races: where does the fiscal envelope fit in?

TIMBERLANDS 7pm every second Tuesday at Apumoana marae. Phone Bernie 3459 852 or Martial 3574 536 in Rotorua.

- ☐ Mar 7 History of class and party.

WELLINGTON 7.30pm every second Monday at People's Resource Centre, 2 Luke Lane (off Te Aro Park). Phone Gordon 3877 380.

- ☐ Mar 6 What do we mean by socialism?
- ☐ Mar 20 How do we get to socialism?

CHRISTCHURCH 7.30pm at Hotel Workers Union Hall, 127 Lichfield St. Phone Roy 3844 681.

- ☐ Mar 8 Who's benefiting from the recovery?

DUNEDIN 7.30pm every Thursday at the Clubs & Societies Building, 84 Albany St. Phone Brian or Laurel 4736 047.

- ☐ Mar 2 Who's benefiting from the recovery?
- ☐ Mar 9 Why are Maori fighting the fiscal envelope?
- ☐ Mar 16 Building the fightback against tertiary fees.

OTHER AREAS The Socialist Workers Organisation also has members and supporters in Napier, Kawerau, Raglan, Palmerston North, Timaru and the West Coast. They can be contacted through the Socialist Centre in Auckland (09) 6343 984.

"Philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it."
— Karl Marx

- ☐ I want to join the Socialist Workers Organisation
- ☐ I want more information about membership

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Union/campus _____

Send to: SWO, PO Box 8851, Auckland

Corporate warriors and Maori workers

IN THE AREA of health, Maori possess the highest child mortality rate and lowest life expectancy.

In education we have the highest secondary school drop-out rate and the lowest level of educational achievement.

Maori have the second highest level of unemployment in the country.

We make up the largest proportion of social welfare recipients and prison inmates.

Maori workers and beneficiaries have been repeatedly hammered by the pro-boss policies of the National government.

But these repressive policies haven't impacted on all Maori equally.

Profits

A small number of Maori business owners have made huge profits at the expense of ordinary Maori workers whose pay packets and job conditions have been under constant attack by government and employers.

Some Maori leaders have actively promoted the pro-business initiative of the "New Corporate Warriors".

This emphasises success in the business world as a means of achieving Maori equality with Pakeha.

These corporate warriors have urged Maori to come out of "grievance mode" and into "development mode".

This may be fine for Maori bosses and their Pakeha counterparts because things have never been so good for them.

However, there is a very different reality for the majority of Maori who are workers and beneficiaries.

The profits of Maori and Pakeha bosses have been substantially boosted by National's repressive policies, such as the Employment Contracts Act, the cutting of social welfare benefits and the introduction of user pays education and health.

Stole

Remember, these Maori business leaders have supported a government that stole from the incomes of Maori and Pakeha workers and beneficiaries to increase profits for the bosses.

That's the nasty truth of how National has financed the economic recovery. It's a recovery shared by Maori business owners, but a disaster for Maori workers and beneficiaries.

Those Maori involved in the Sealord deal collected a profitable return for their wheeling and dealing in Wellington, but the results will be disastrous for future generations of Maori.

Anyone who doesn't make a class analysis is at a loss to explain why the Maori elite have done so well when quite clearly the majority of Maori are suffering.

There are class divisions in Maori society. Maori bosses - like their Pakeha counterparts - have a compelling interest in maximising their profits, while Maori workers have a compelling interest in maximising their wages.

The pursuit of profit and the suffering inflicted on Maori workers and beneficiaries is entirely consistent with the class interests of the Maori elite.

That'll be the day

"OH, THEY call it stormy Monday..." goes the old blues song.

And a stormy Monday it was when the Maori protesters got stuck in at Waitangi.

A lasting memory of the event is the image of prime minister Bolger, white faced with impotent rage, yelling back at the protesters.

Strange to see Bolger, the great republican, getting so upset at missing a speech from the Queen's representative and seeing the Union Jack trampled.

Bolger was still smarting a week later when he addressed the Auckland Chamber of Commerce.

Waitangi Day has got to go, the PM told them.

We should look for an "appropriate" new name for the country's National Day, he said.

Changing the name is a futile attempt to push the problems under the carpet.

But it will be interesting to see what "appropriate" names come up, especially if Bolger gets suggestions from the types he usually takes notice of.

There's sure to be strong support in the cabinet for "Economic Recovery Day", while the Business Roundtable will be tossing up between "Privatisation Day" and "Employment Contracts Day".

ACT is likely to mount an expensive TV campaign on behalf of "Unfinished Business Day", or more simply, "RogerDay".

Then again there's bound to be some in the National Party keen to use the opportunity to crawl back into the good books of the United States.

They could think laterally and suggest that as February 6

is Reagan's birthday we could call it "RonaldDay". Or try and cover all the cultural and political bases by making it "Ronald McDonald Day".

Anyway, you can see what a

dog's breakfast we're likely to get if it's left up to the powers-that-be to rename Waitangi Day after the stuff they hold dear.

So it's probably best for the government to leave the name of the day as it is and get on with other business - like properly addressing the very real grievances of the Maori people.

Not just the top Maori elite, but the majority of working class Maori currently suffering from institutionalised racism, poverty, disease, unemployment and exploitation.

The Nats can be expected to pick up this challenge on "Flying Pigs Day".



Young and old unite on Rotorua march against the fiscal envelope

The Growing Anger



When union secretary Bill Andersen was jailed in 1974, thousands of workers walked off the job without being told. Their demonstration filled Auckland's main street. This illustrated the confident militancy of workers in the 1970s. We're now heading in that direction again.

1970s militancy: the fire last time

France, May 1968: hundreds of thousands of students occupied the universities and ten million workers staged history's biggest general strike.

Waves of strikes then swept across Europe.

The 1974 British Miners Strike brought down the Tory government.

There was also a major revival of the movements of the oppressed: ever greater numbers fought

against the US invasion of Vietnam, racism, women's oppression, the oppression of gays and lesbians and environmental destruction.

A generation of young workers and students became aware of their collective power.

They realized that when enough people join together in struggle it's possible to change the world.

In Aotearoa from the late 1960s onwards there

was a similar upsurge.

Rank-and-file union militancy forced the authorities to reverse their 1968 nil wage order.

The strike waves of 1969-70, 1973 and 1976-77 were driven from below.

Workers confidence in their collective strength had a dramatic impact. Bosses and successive Labour and National governments were forced onto the back foot.

The 1980's: downturn in struggle

The 1980s saw a downturn in the level of worker and student activism.

Strikes in Aotearoa were mostly defensive – to defend, rather than improve, wages and conditions.

Right wing governments, such as Thatcher's in Britain and Reagan's in the US, came to power around the world.

In NZ the Labour government launched an anti-worker, free market programme which National is now continuing.

The balance of class forces shifted in favour of employers.

As unemployment rose

and unions suffered defeats, many workers became demoralized.

The confidence of the rank-and-file to act independently of conservative union officials and take wildcat strike action largely disappeared.

Bosses became increasingly daring in their attacks on workers. In New Zealand the Employers Federation and Business Roundtable started to push for the Employment Contracts Act.

This climate created real difficulties for socialists. Many refused to face the reality that during the

1980s workers were losing, not winning.

And many socialists believed that the stalinist regimes in Europe constituted "really existing socialism". Hence for many on both the Right and the Left, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 represented "the death of socialism".

But the sister organizations of the Socialist Workers Organization (SWO) in places like Britain and Australia held their ground.

And when the Berlin Wall came down it merely confirmed our view that the stalinist regimes were state capitalist.

OVER THE PAST 25 years there have been three stages in the struggles of workers and the oppressed.

The period of upturn lasted from 1968 to the late 1970s.

The period of downturn ran from the late 1970s to 1989.

Now we're in the third stage – a period of transition from downturn to upturn.

BRIAN ROPER draws the lessons for today.

Period of transition

Far from the beginning of the 1990s heralding the final victory of capitalism, it saw an upsurge in workers struggle around the world.

The Los Angeles riot. Massive protests against the poll tax and pit closures in Britain. Strikes and protests across Europe, including a general strike involving 10 million workers in Italy last November. These are just some examples of the rise of working class struggle during the 1990s.

In New Zealand, the Employment Contracts Act was a major defeat for the union movement. Strike activity fell to a very low level. But during 1993 and 1994 it started to pick up again.

Just as workers overseas have started to fight back against the attacks of bosses and their right-wing governments, so too in New Zealand workers, students and Maori have begun to fight back on an increasing scale during the 1990s.

The upturn in struggle has been hesitant.

Some groups of workers have won important victories, such as the Mitsubishi workers, seafarers and Telecom workers. Other groups have experienced defeats, such as the Kinleith workers and Yel-low Bus drivers.

And many workers are not yet confident enough to take strike action.

As leading British socialist Tony Cliff puts it, the recovery in workers struggle is uneven. "It is not simply up and up. After a long pe-

riod of sickness of the movement you don't get recuperation easily. If you have been in bed for six months because of illness you don't get up and run the marathon."

At the same time, the level of anger below – amongst workers, students, Maori and other oppressed groups – is much greater now than it was during the 1980s.

This means that explosive struggles can take place very suddenly. And there is a slow but steady revival in the willingness of rank-and-file unionists to go into struggle.

"Explosive struggles can take place very quickly"

Socialists must connect with this anger and constantly argue for the next step forward, as well as highlighting the links between the various struggles.

We must argue for a rank and file movement to revitalize the unions.

And we must build a mass revolutionary socialist workers party for the day when the struggle really takes off, as it did in France during the revolutionary days of May 1968.

One oldie, one goodie, one malfunction

by BARRY BROWN

THREE MOVIES to look out for.

The Wages of Fear is a famous French-Italian movie made in 1954 that's currently doing the rounds of the art-houses.

An American oil-mining company in Venezuela needs two truck loads of horrifically unstable nitroglycerine to be transported across a night-and-a-day of hellish roads.

Union labour won't do the job, so four dead-beats are hired. It's edge-of-the-seat stuff, a relentless portrayal of greed and desperation and stars the late Yves Montand, long-time member of the French Communist Party.

By way of total contrast, **The Sum of Us** is a small Aussie movie about the relationship between a working class widower and his footy-playing plumber son. They live alone, taking the piss out of each other, looking after each other.

The old man feels it's time they both found marriage partners. The twist to the story is that the lad is gay and the old man accepts this and wants to help the lad find Mr Right.

When it's crude, it's very funny; when it's cosy, it's a wee bit irritating.

The Last Tattoo is a local film dealing in part with the unique power that trade union bosses exercised in New Zealand during the Second World War (a character coyly named "Joseph Patrick Carroll" appeared unadorned in the original script as "Fintan Patrick Walsh").

The setting is Wellington in 1943 (though mainly filmed in Dunedin) with American GIs flooding the streets and brothels, a general election imminent and a rebellious First Echelon back on furlough from the Western Desert.

The movie follows a Health Department nurse trying to track down a particularly virulent strain of VD and stumbling on a conspiracy between American top brass and corrupt union leaders.

It's a disappointing malfunction, the convoluted plot getting in the way of character, suspense and credibility.



Leading Labour Party politician Ralph Simpson (Martyn Sanderson) being blackmailed by union leader James Patrick Carroll (John Barry) in *The Last Tattoo*

Big business applause

by BARRY BROWN

THERE'S A tradition of writers, actors and artists lending their talents to the Left, particularly during periods of intense class struggle.

Currently, though, the artistic rebellion, such as it is, seems to be pretty apolitical: "Free yourself! Be an artist!"

"There ain't no counter-culture. Everything ends up sold across the counter."

Round Auckland, one of the most-talked-about theatre groups was Mike Mizrahi's Inside Out Theatre Company.

Their adaptation of Thomas Mann's *The Holy Sinner*, performed a few years back inside a massive, derelict warehouse down by the wharves and then taken to Wellington, was greeted with wild acclamation and huge, youthful audiences.

They followed it up with works by Brecht and Carson McCullers and began writing their own material.

Where are they now?

As the Arts Council cut back on their grants - in line with the thinking that has drained our education and health systems - the company became impoverished.

They turned away from the theatre and

began being courted by Big Business, who know a good act when they see one (or hear about it).

Mike Mizrahi and Inside Out now do lavish, massively funded "presentations" and "opening spectacles" for commercial firms.

They did the show that accompanied the advertising industry's 1994 awards.

They did the show, just before the summer break, that rolled up the curtain on Sky Television's new Orange Channel.

Sure, they still get sensational reviews - but the reviews are in the business papers, the *NBR* and the *Independent*.

"There ain't no counter-culture," a friend used to say to me back in the days when a lot of people argued there was. "Everything ends up sold across the counter."

Lotto for the rich

by BARRY BROWN

THE VIEWING highlight for many working people (and even more so the unemployed) is not *Shortland Street* or the Sunday night movie, but Lotto on TV2, Saturday nights at 8.

The little balls roll out of the cage and you become a millionaire. Well, that's the dream. The odds do tend to be against it.

The great majority of people who take tickets in Lotto are the poor. Of course. Lotto is paraded as the solution to their problems.

For the rich, what's a million bucks? It's the mere consultancy fee for flogging off bits and pieces once owned by the state.

What this means is that the rich miss out on the excitement of it all. Instead of sitting thrilled around the telly on Saturday nights, they're doing whatever it is they do in Remuera and Karori and the Cashmere Hills - and feeling bored.

A commentator in the British *Socialist Worker* has come up with a solution to this dilemma facing our poor little rich folk.

There should be a second Lotto.

This second Lotto would be for the rich only - and compulsory.

The winner of this Lotto would have to pay for all the prizes in the first.

So Sir Ron and Sir Bob and Sir Michael would sit around on the edge of their seats like the rest of us on Saturday nights, screaming out for a pencil so they could write the numbers down and check their tickets and see if they have to fork out a million bucks to a couple of nurses in Otara and the family of some unemployed railway worker in Napier.

New Zealand would once again become a nation with a common endeavour, and the government would have millions more in Lotto money.

Perhaps readers should clip this proposal out and forward it to Helen Clark who is said to be desperate for policy.

Hospital protest forces government retreat



KAITIAIA

6,000 marchers flooded the main street to protect their hospital, whose services are threatened by a government-inspired "review".

The February 9 march was easily the biggest ever seen in Kaitiaia.

Young and old, Maori and Pakeha, women and men were united in their determination to send a clear message to the local health authority and the minis-

ter of health - "Hands off our hospital!"

Just three days later, Jenny Shipley backed away from her previous hard line advocacy of downgrading and closing rural hospitals. She told a medical conference in Whakatane that rural hospitals would continue to be important.

The sheer scale of the Kaitiaia demonstration, following on from similar protests in other small towns, has forced the government to back pedal a little.

Mill trouble

KAWERAU

Three boilermakers locked out by Tasman Pulp & Paper are back on the job after their union won an interim court injunction.

They had received lots of support from other unionists during their information picket at the plant.

Now the company is going back to court in a bid to overturn the injunction and lock them out again for refusing to accept a pay cut of \$6,000 a year.

While union secretary Harold Appleton doesn't think the mill workers are yet able to take the offensive against the company, he believes that "we are blunting the edge of their big knife".

Honour pickets says contract

GLENBROOK and CANADA

Glenbrook steel workers are debating how to oppose BHP's increasing use of outside contractors and the related demand for the loss of 150 permanent jobs.

The legal strategy of the Engineers Union has just delivered an arbitration verdict favourable to workers. But this will only buy time before the bosses find another way to cut staff.

Workers at Fletcher Challenge Canada have shown how to defeat their employer's drive towards labour casualisation.

Canadian mill workers went on strike in December, forcing the boss to minimise contractor use

and giving unions regulatory powers over them.

In addition, the company had to agree to this contract clause:

"Contractors employees shall honour all legal picket lines at the mill site. Failure to do so shall result in disqualification from future access to the mill site for the term of the contract. A contractor will not be allowed on the mill site if it has a current, demonstrated practice of crossing legal picket lines."

The lesson is clear. BHP workers need to rely on a strategy of collective action. A strike puts more fear into the boss than a hundred legal cases.

Teachers vote for strike

NATIONWIDE

Primary and kindergarten teachers are gearing up for a strike on March 1-2 as we go to press.

Union president Helen Duncan said teachers are "furious" over the government's refusal to implement pay parity with secondary teachers.

"They are prepared for long-term industrial ac-

tion," she reported.

A national delegates' meeting in February supported a further strike if their pay claims weren't met.

The State Services Commission has been told to lift its pay offer.

This is a clear sign of government weakness. If teachers stay united and stick it to the government, they can win all of their demands.

Students protest fees hike

AUCKLAND

Within hours of Lockwood Smith's announcement of tertiary fee hikes, 25 students occupied the Education Ministry office.

The students wanted to show that the fee increase isn't the "dead issue" that Smith claimed it to be.

The occupiers left peacefully after the arrival of three cop vans.

Two days later, students climbed onto the

top of the National Party HQ and dropped a huge banner over the front of the building. Passing motorists sounded their horns in support.

The protest ended after a large contingent of cops ordered them off the roof.

Demonstrate against ACT

AUCKLAND

6.40pm, Mon 13 March
Logan Campbell Centre
(opp. Greenlane Hosp.)
Organised by CounterACT

Blockade

BULLER

Angry Buller sawmillers have blockaded a logging road to stop rimu logs leaving their district and taking their jobs with them.

The mill workers are upset that Timberlands West Coast, a state-owned enterprise, has awarded the rimu felling contract to a sawmill outside the region.

They say this breaches a 1986 government accord supposed to maintain a viable sawmilling industry in Buller until 2006.

But the accord was made conditional on the operation of "market forces", which introduced a loophole big enough for a logging truck to drive through.

The blockade has put pressure on the government to make a U-turn.

The minister for state-owned enterprises said on February 20 that he was considering an official inquiry into Timberlands rimu tendering process.

WHERE'S THE ACTION?

ON 2 September 1994, CTU president Ken Douglas advocated a combined trade union campaign to fight for big pay rises.

He said unions should break the law if necessary to obtain the contracts they want.

But no observable practical steps have yet been taken by the head of the Council of Trade Unions to mobilise workers around a united pay campaign.

Dating from his speech, there's still

**no action
from Ken after
179 days**

Police hide while hui rejects fiscal envelope

ROTORUA

A march against the fiscal envelope doubled in size to 400 before it got to the Te Arawa hui which rejected National's treaty proposals.

The February 15 march was mostly composed of Maori. It was notable for drawing together rangitahi (youth) and kaumatua (elders) in a significant display of united Maori opposition to the fiscal envelope.

Some wore T-shirts with the words "Tino rangatiratanga - Maori independence".

Others carried banners like "Maori land is not for sale", "Down with the Crown" and "Maori sovereignty".

Maori wardens let the marchers onto Ohinemutu marae, venue of the hui between cabinet ministers and Te Arawa, after they agreed to lay down their banners.



Confident marchers in Rotorua

Uniformed police were banned from the marae by tribal elders. But plain clothes police were very much in evidence at strategic points.

A 100-strong squad of police, some dressed in

riot gear, hid about 300 metres from the marae behind a large concrete wall in a carpark. There they remained while cabinet ministers were told to "return the fiscal envelope to sender".

First ruling against political discrimination

AUCKLAND

The Human Rights Commission found that Yellow Bus driver Kevin O'Dea had been "discriminated against by the company on the grounds of political opinion".

This is the first ruling against political discrimination under new clauses of the Human Rights Act.

O'Dea, a member of the Socialist Workers Organisation, had been playing a prominent role in building union resistance to the YBC's massive 1992 wage cuts.

YBC bosses objected to him distributing a socialist leaflet to YBC workers.

It called for "strikes and pickets and protests" against the "low wages,

bad conditions and lack of union rights" faced by YBC workers, as well as "solidarity actions with other workers who're fighting back against the Contracts Act".

In a reference to YBC chief executive Barry Turley, the leaflet said: "Let's stick it to Turley. Let's stand united as a workforce. Let's get organised to claw back what we lost in 1992. It's payback time."

YBC management disciplined O'Dea for distributing this leaflet. This took the form of "verbal counselling".

But on January 10 the Human Rights Commission ruled that the YBC discriminated against

O'Dea "on the grounds of political opinion".

Talks are underway to work out the final settlement between O'Dea and the company.

This landmark decision has grown out of persistent work by O'Dea and his fellow socialists to organise YBC workers on the ground and overcome the demoralisation of contract defeats.

There has been nationwide media interest in the case.

In the words of O'Dea: "This ruling will make it easier for all workers and their delegates to stand up against employer pressure and to organise strong, democratic unions on the job."

Hoisting a new flag

WAITANGI

Embarrassed by the support Tai Tokerau elders gave to Te Kauri's protests against the fiscal envelope, the deputy prime minister cancelled Waitangi Day's formal ceremony at dusk.

This bombshell followed a day of vigorous but peaceful demonstrations by 800 people. In a traditional insult, a Maori activist bared his tattooed buttocks at Cath Tizard, the governor-general.

Another trampled the New Zealand flag during the prime minister's speech, causing Bolger to furiously declare that "it takes no courage" to "dis-

honour the flag".

After a short scuffle between a government official and Te Kauri leader Hone Harawira, a squad of uniformed police moved in to make arrests, but they were physically seen off the marae by a crowd of protesters.

In the late afternoon, Te Kauri supporters hoisted their own ensigns on the Waitangi flagpole in place of the three official flags.

This symbolised the overwhelming mood of opposition to the government and the system.

Afterwards the participants were elated, many expressing feelings of freedom and strength.

The blanket is returned

OPOTIKI

Tuhoe activist Tame Iti returned a blanket to cabinet minister Doug Graham and asked for the return of Maori land.

This satire on last century's alienation of Maori land took place on Terere marae at the second of a series of hui to discuss the fiscal envelope. It captured the imagination of many of the 1,000 people there.

In a stinging attack on the fiscal envelope, Iti said National's broken promises were today be-

ing written on an electric blanket with a felt pen.

Afterwards, Graham subtly condemned such up-front opposition. He claimed to understand the "pain" of Maori, but said the only way forward was "forgiveness" - "not hatred".

But no amount of government "sweet talk" could mask the united opposition of Maori at the hui. All of the more than 20 speakers, young and old, radical and conservative, rejected the fiscal envelope.

Kaumatua flats struggle

NORTHLAND

Whilst the government says it wants to settle Maori grievances, a state-owned enterprise is busy creating new injustices.

Housing NZ has raised the interest rates for kaumatua (old people's) flats on Northland marae.

This is forcing marae trustees to raise the rents on these flats. In the worst case, the rent rose from \$49 to \$150 a week.

Northland Maori say Housing NZ's interest rises break an old promise by Maori Affairs.

At a February 18 meeting on Te Rapunga marae, Waiohio, 60 people decided to form a collective to fight the issue.

They told Housing NZ officials to reinstate the former interest charges.

Supporters came to the hui from areas outside Northland.

According to inside sources, the minister of housing is very disturbed that the issue has spread beyond Northland Maori.

The government is clearly worried about the struggle spreading.

Socialist Worker

Education fightback WE CAN WIN!

THINGS TO DO

THERE ARE three things students need to do right away:

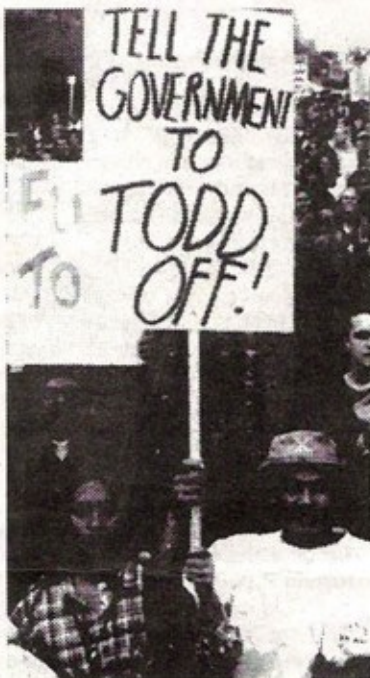
Get involved in your Education Action Group – push for student strikes and occupations of key university buildings.

Make sure your EAG leadership is democratically elected and recallable.

Pass these resolutions at your next Student General Meeting:

(1) "We call on the NZ University Students Association to launch a nationally coordinated campaign of direct action to stop fee increases and fight for everyone's right to free education."

(2) "We call on our



students association to put pressure on our university council to boycott fee increases. If our council won't listen, our students association is to call a student strike to stop these increases."

by ANDREW GEDDIS

WHEN HE announced the latest rise in tertiary fees the education minister declared: "While student protests would still occur from time to time, tertiary funding was now a dead issue".

These words will haunt Lockwood Smith.

In France, thousands of students took to the streets in February to protest against their government's proposal to increase tuition fees. They joined with hundreds of thousands of striking school teachers who were demanding more staff, higher pay and better conditions.

This unity between students and teachers forced the French government to back down and scrap its user pays plan.

In New Zealand we have the opportunity to do likewise. On March 1 and 2, primary teachers are striking in protest at the government's refusal to

grant them pay parity with secondary teachers.

We should be on the streets supporting the teachers in their strike, and at the same time demanding that all education be made freely available.

Student marches are necessary, but most attention is paid when we threaten major disruptions by occupying buildings.

Late last year, some 500 students at Australian National University in Canberra took over and ran their campus registry for a week to demand the scrapping of \$8,000 law fees – and they won!

On campuses around

New Zealand we should be looking at similar mass occupations which will challenge the government and the university authorities who run the fees system. This will revitalise the campaign against tertiary fees.

The NZ University Students Association and the Aotearoa Polytech Students Association have called for a campaign of "civil disobedience" to protest against education cuts.

We must make sure these protests are big and effective and cannot be dismissed by Lockwood Smith as "dead". That's the way we will win.

Testing your ability to pay

by ANDREW GEDDIS

EDUCATION minister Lockwood Smith announced on January 10 that option B of the infamous Todd Taskforce will be implemented.

Students will be required to pay 25 per cent of the cost of their courses.

In 1995, university fees range from the lowest of \$1,384 for a commerce student at Lincoln to the highest of \$18,172 for a dentistry student at Otago.

The average fee in 1994 was \$2,099, this year it is \$2,206.

Option B means that students will be forced to pay 1 per cent more of their course costs each year for the next five years.

This means, on average, a \$100 rise in fees every year until 2000. Many will be paying more.

All this from a man who in 1990 signed a pledge that if tuition

fees weren't scrapped he would resign from parliament.

And under the "means tested" student allowance scheme, the parental income of most students places them above the level at which a livable allowance will be paid. This is because the government has set the income test level at a ridiculously low amount.

Borrow

Students must borrow money to pay course fees and living expenses.

In 1994 the average student had a debt of \$8,500 to the government loans scheme.

As well, most students have an overdraft with their bank.

This is closing off education to those who can't afford to pay for it.

Rather than testing academic ability, user pays education tests your ability to pay.

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